

# THE INTERCITY BUS CONNECTION

NCDOT / PTD COMMUNITY  
TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE

RALEIGH, CAROLINA  
JANUARY 7, 2014

*ITRE* Public Transportation Group

# North Carolina DOT Intercity Bus Program



- ❑ Intercity Bus Transportation—what, where
- ❑ Federal Program—FTA 5311(f)
- ❑ NC DOT Intercity Bus Program
- ❑ Services Receiving Operating Assistance
- ❑ Participation—call for applications

# Intercity Bus Program—what it is

Definition—Intercity bus service is:

- ❑ Regularly scheduled
- ❑ For the general public
- ❑ Operates with limited stops over fixed routes
- ❑ Connects two or more urban areas not in close proximity
- ❑ Can transport passengers' baggage
- ❑ Makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points

## Intercity Bus Program—what it is



Meaningful connections—two aspects:

- Place—allows connectivity at a designated location served by intercity bus carriers, either directly or on the street immediately adjacent to the facility
- Time—allows transfers for both outbound and inbound passengers within a 2-hour period.

# Intercity Bus Program—what it is



## Interlining:

- Involves joint ticketing with other intercity bus carriers—allows passengers to purchase a single ticket for their entire trip
- Lists stops as part of national schedules—so passengers are aware of intercity bus service to destinations nationwide
- Provides for splitting ticket revenues among all carriers on a passenger's trip

# Intercity Bus Program—what it is

## Feeder Service:

- “...provision of service that acts as a feeder to intercity bus service, and which makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points.”
- Can be different than intercity service—e.g. demand-responsive vs. fixed route; van or cutaway vs. over-the-road coach; etc.
- May also provide access to rail or air service.

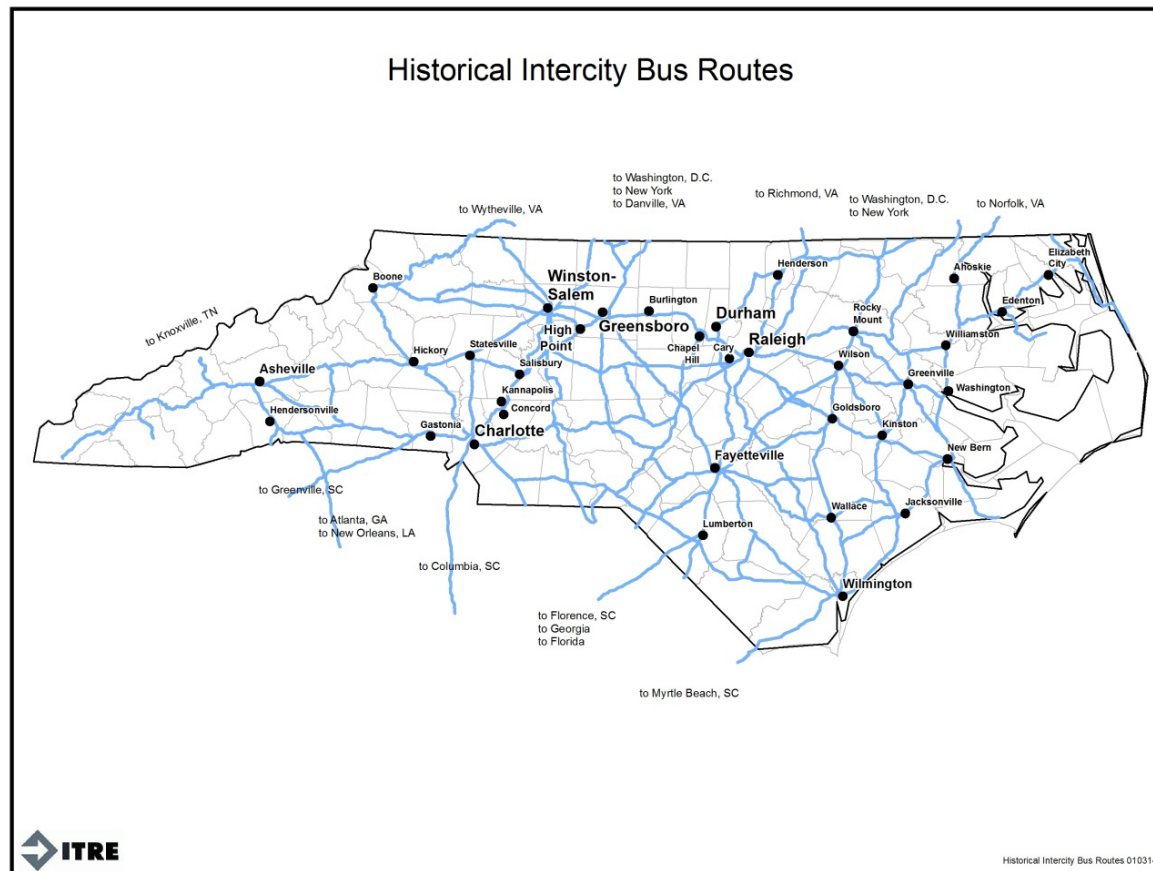
## Intercity Bus Program—what it is not

Intercity bus service is **not**:

- ❑ Commuter service—service designed primarily to provide daily work trips within the local commuting area
- ❑ Regional service—extensive circulation within a region vs. regular service from limited points in an origin community to limited points in a destination community
- ❑ Incidental service—making an incidental stop at an intercity bus facility among other destinations in a city at the end of a route, without regard to scheduled connections.

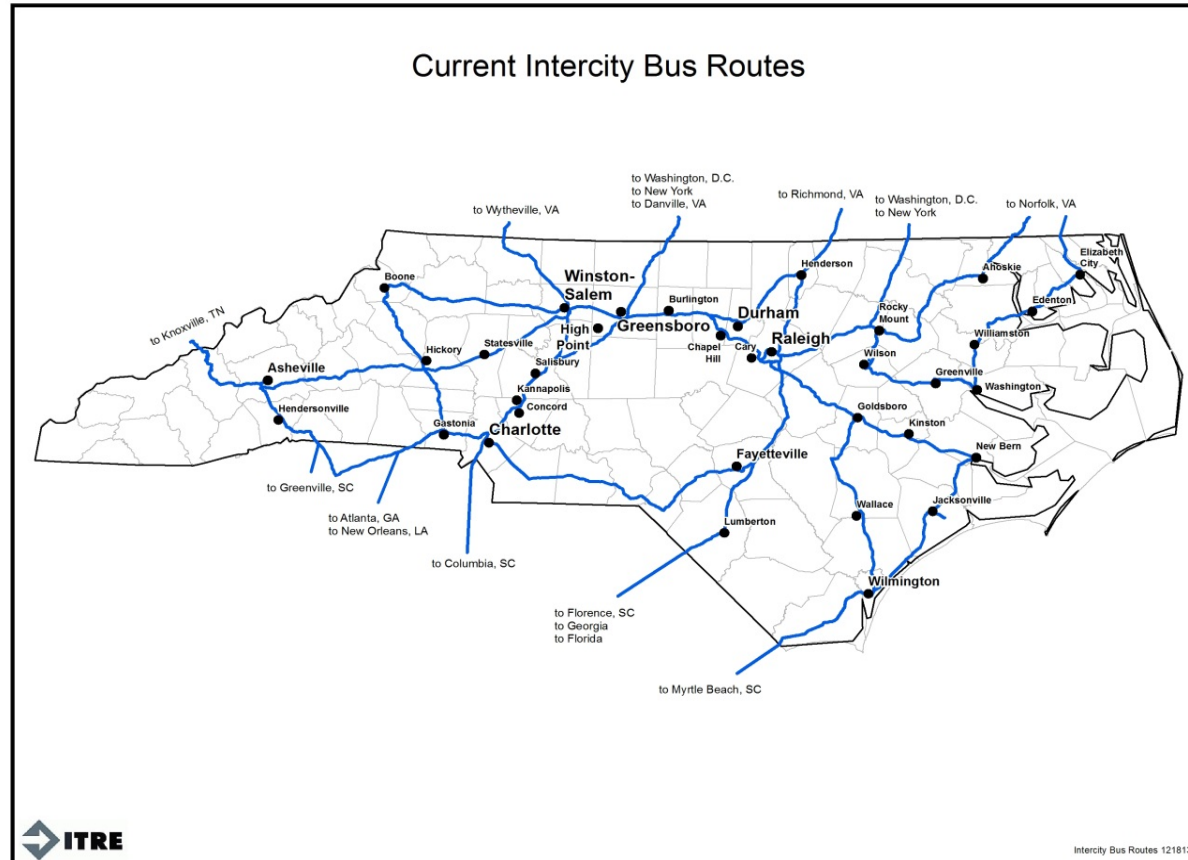
# Intercity Bus—where it used to go

## Intercity bus service—1976



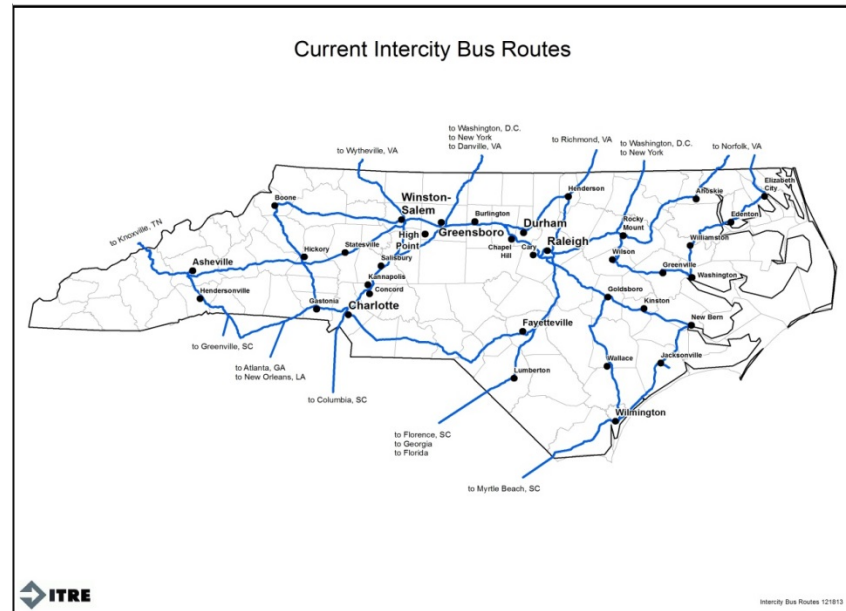
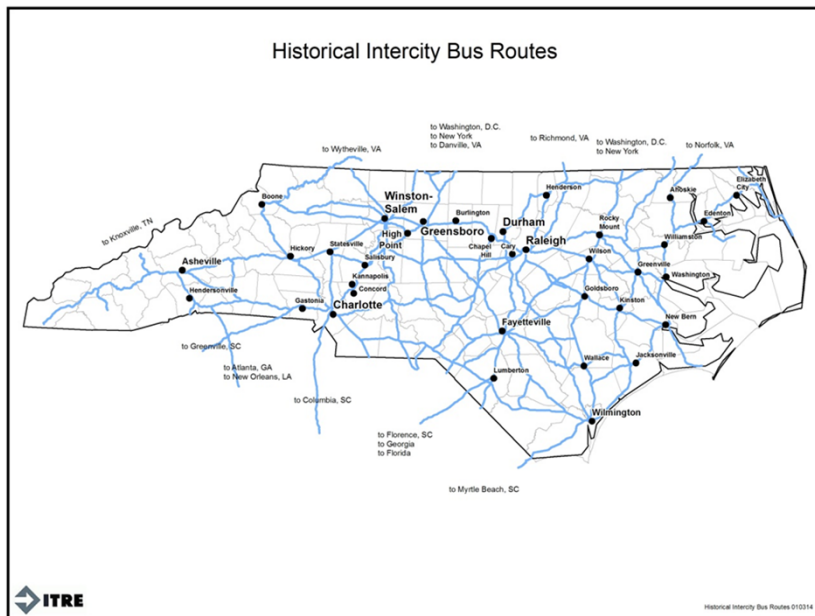
# Intercity Bus—where it goes now

## Intercity bus service—2014



# Intercity Bus—then vs. now

## Intercity bus service—1976 vs. 2014



## Federal FTA 5311(f) Program—what it does

- Started in 1991 as part of FTA 5311 Program (formula grants for rural areas)
- Funding continued in subsequent transportation authorizations
- Provides transportation among smaller communities in rural areas
- Links rural areas to larger urban areas
- Provides access to the national intercity bus network (plus passenger rail & air)
- Operating assistance helps to maintain intercity bus service on unprofitable routes

## FTA 5311(f) Program—why it exists



### National Objectives:

1. Support meaningful connections between nonurbanized areas and the regional or national system of intercity bus service;
2. Support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in nonurbanized areas; and
3. Support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance, and capital investment in facilities.

## FTA 5311(f) Program—what states have to do



### Key Requirements:

- States must spend at least 15% of annual 5311 apportionment on intercity bus (unless Governor certifies all of the state's intercity bus needs are met)
- Conduct a ***consultation process*** with intercity bus providers

## FTA 5311(f) Program—working with industry stakeholders



### Consultation Process:

- Provides an ongoing means of communication between NCDOT and intercity bus providers
- Informs intercity bus carriers and encourages their participation in planning process
- Opportunity for intercity bus providers to submit proposals
- In NC, included as part of *Needs Assessment* to compile / determine unmet needs

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—how it developed

## History:

- NCDOT – PTD established program and funded services in two regions without intercity bus
- FY 2004-05—funding provided for service in four areas
- 2007—*Needs Assessment* conducted by ITRE
- 2008—analysis of 6 potential routes from *Needs Assessment*
- 2009—*Statewide Intercity Bus Network Plan*
- 2010—3 routes (1 seasonal) plus Greensboro—Boone *Mountaineer Express* targeted for operating assistance
- 2010—temporary funding provided to avoid Greyhound abandonment of 5 unprofitable eastern NC routes
- 2011—8 routes receive operating assistance
- 2013—2<sup>nd</sup> Charlotte—Boone trip on Fridays added during ASU semesters
- 2014—*Call for Applications to Operate Services* (contracts to start July 1)

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—goals



## Primary goals:

- Development of a ***statewide, linked network*** of local, regional, and intercity transportation services
- ***Preservation*** of cost effective intercity services
- Development of ***new*** intercity or feeder services
- Focus on ***operating assistance*** (not capital)

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—plan



## **Statewide Network Plan:**

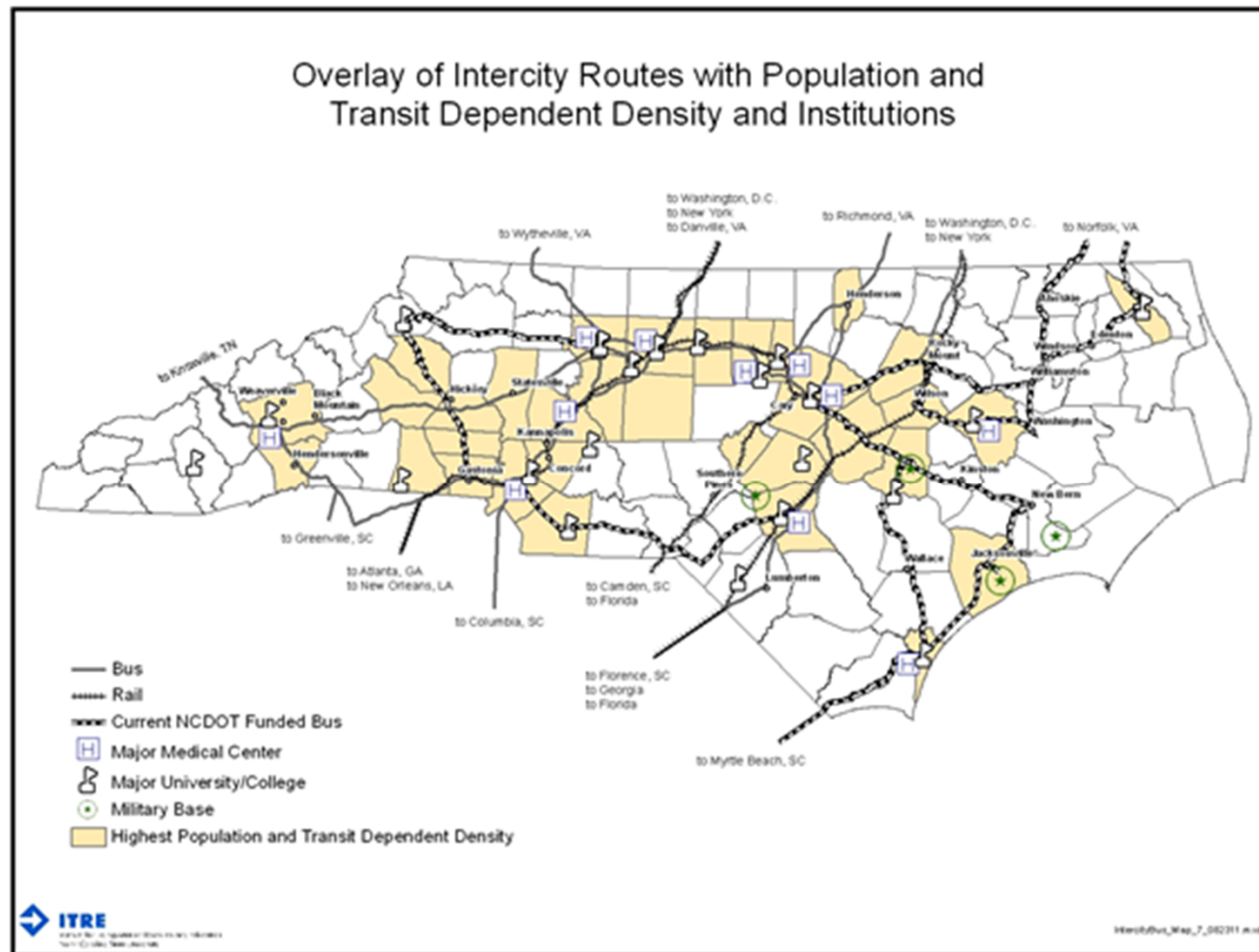
- ❑ Developed to provide a framework for expanding service into a comprehensive statewide network of intercity bus services
- ❑ Determined areas with greatest potential demand
- ❑ Identified gaps in network, particularly in areas with high demand
- ❑ Resulted in priorities for new services

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—plan

## Components of demand analysis:

- **People**—transit-dependent—youth, elderly, no auto, low income, disabled
- **Places**—trip generators—major origins/destinations; e.g., educational institutions, medical centers, military bases
- **Service gaps**—overlay of existing intercity bus and passenger rail services

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—plan



# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—how it works

## Current Process:

- ❑ Conduct **Needs Assessment** (survey stakeholders and passengers; analyze schedules / connections; identify services targeted for funding)
- ❑ Put out **Call for Applications** (developed by NCDOT; includes meeting/teleconference to discuss potential applicants' questions)
- ❑ Application submittal and evaluation
- ❑ Develop / execute **contracts**
- ❑ **Implement** services
- ❑ **Monitor** services
- ❑ Update **Statewide Network Plan**

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—needs assessment

## Needs Assessment:

- Survey sent to intercity bus providers, private-for-hire operators, CT systems, planners, county managers
- Compile input on unmet / desired intercity bus services
- Analyze responses; recommend services to receive assistance
- NCDOT – PTD determines services to be targeted for assistance in a *Call for Applications to Operate Services*

## NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—funding

Allowable uses of 5311(f) funds:

- Planning and marketing
- Capital grants for facilities
- Operating grants, including feeder service—cover ***net operating deficit*** (operating costs minus fare / other revenues)
- Other—capital grants for vehicles or vehicle-related equipment; applications of ITS technology for coordinated information and scheduling

## NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—operating assistance



### Funding sources:

- Operating assistance—50% federal; 50% state/local
- Federal 5311—approx. \$3-4 million per year
- State—approx. \$300-400 thousand per year
- 5311(f) In-Kind Match—allows use of 100% federal funds

## NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—operating assistance



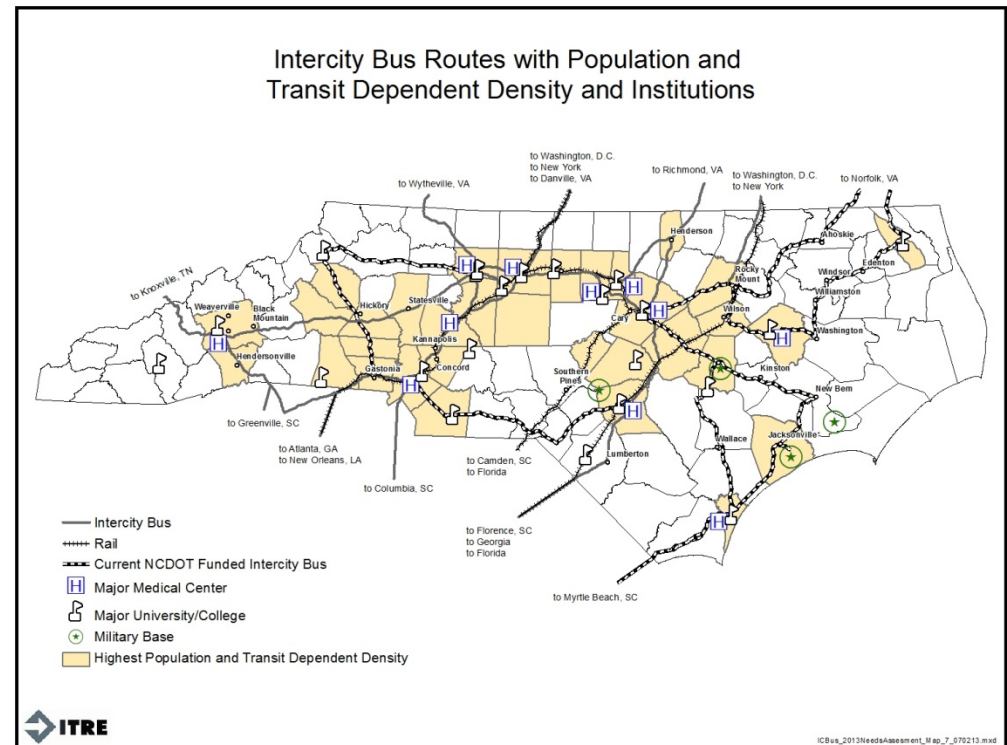
### In-Kind Match:

- Started as pilot project; now part of program
- Used with feeder service connecting to an unsubsidized segment of intercity bus service
- Allows use of costs of the unsubsidized segments as an in-kind match for operating costs of connecting feeder service
- Requires written private operator agreement for use of costs of unsubsidized segment
- Used in NC since 2011 (first state in Region IV)

# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

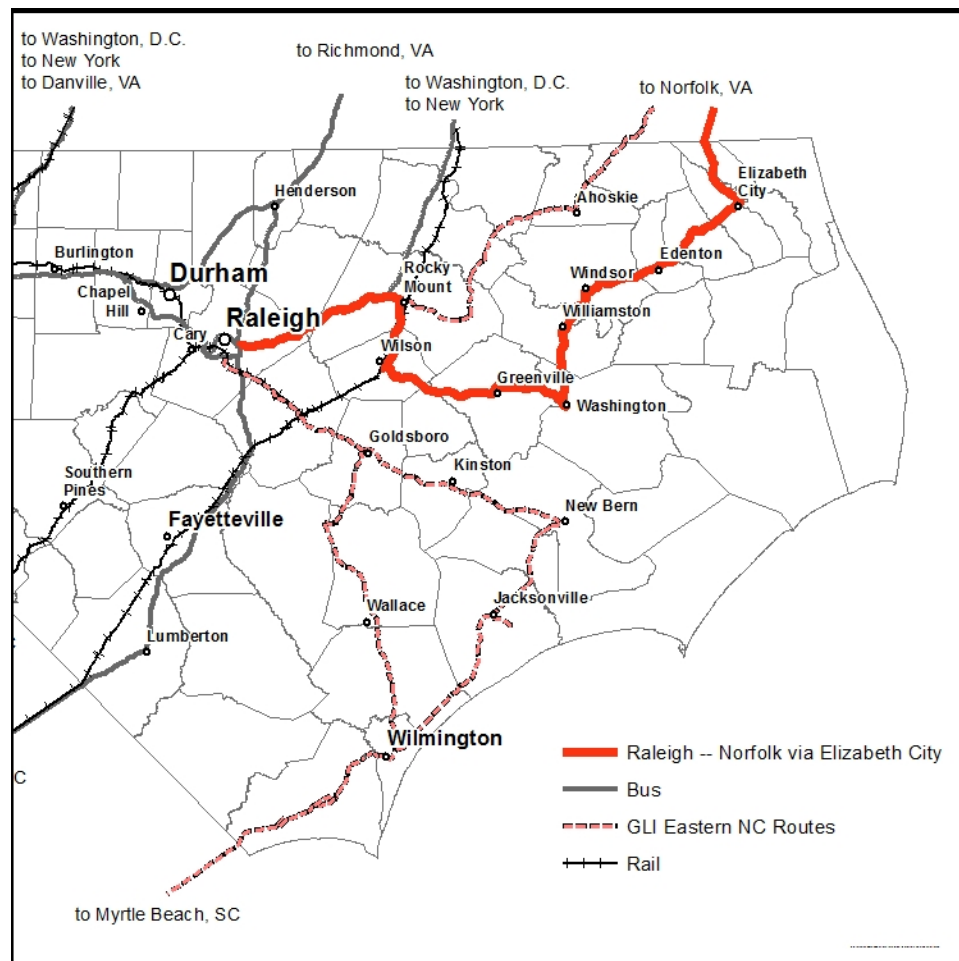
## Routes:

- Raleigh—Norfolk via Elizabeth City
- Raleigh—Norfolk via Ahoskie
- Raleigh—Wilmington
- Raleigh—Myrtle Beach
- Raleigh—Jacksonville
  
- Greensboro—Boone
- Boone—Charlotte
  
- Charlotte—Fayetteville



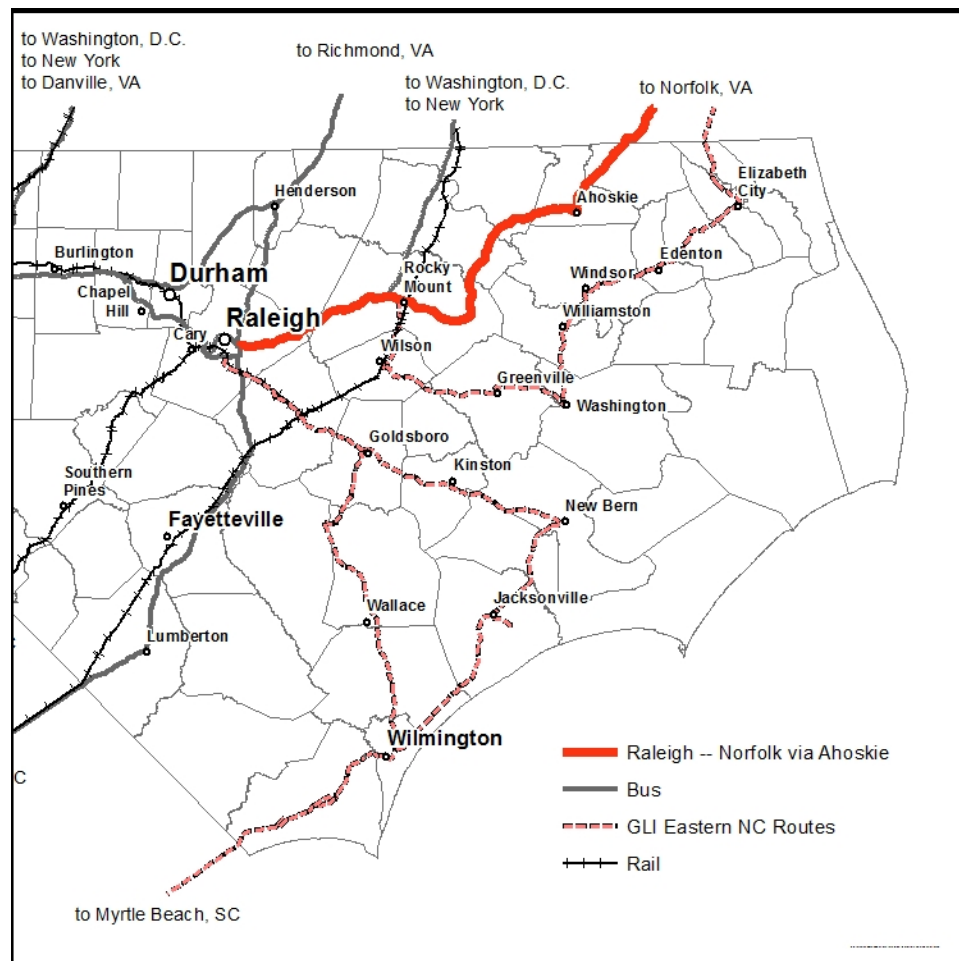
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Raleigh—Norfolk via Elizabeth City



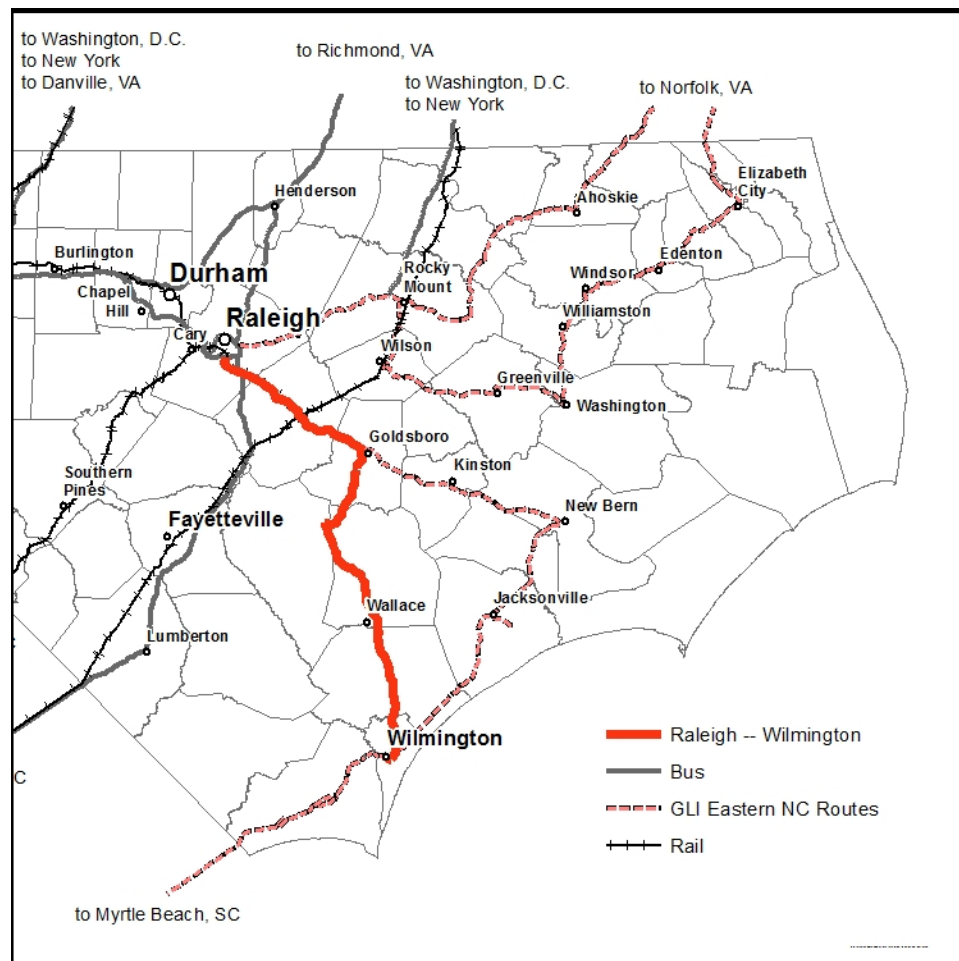
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Raleigh—Norfolk via Ahoskie



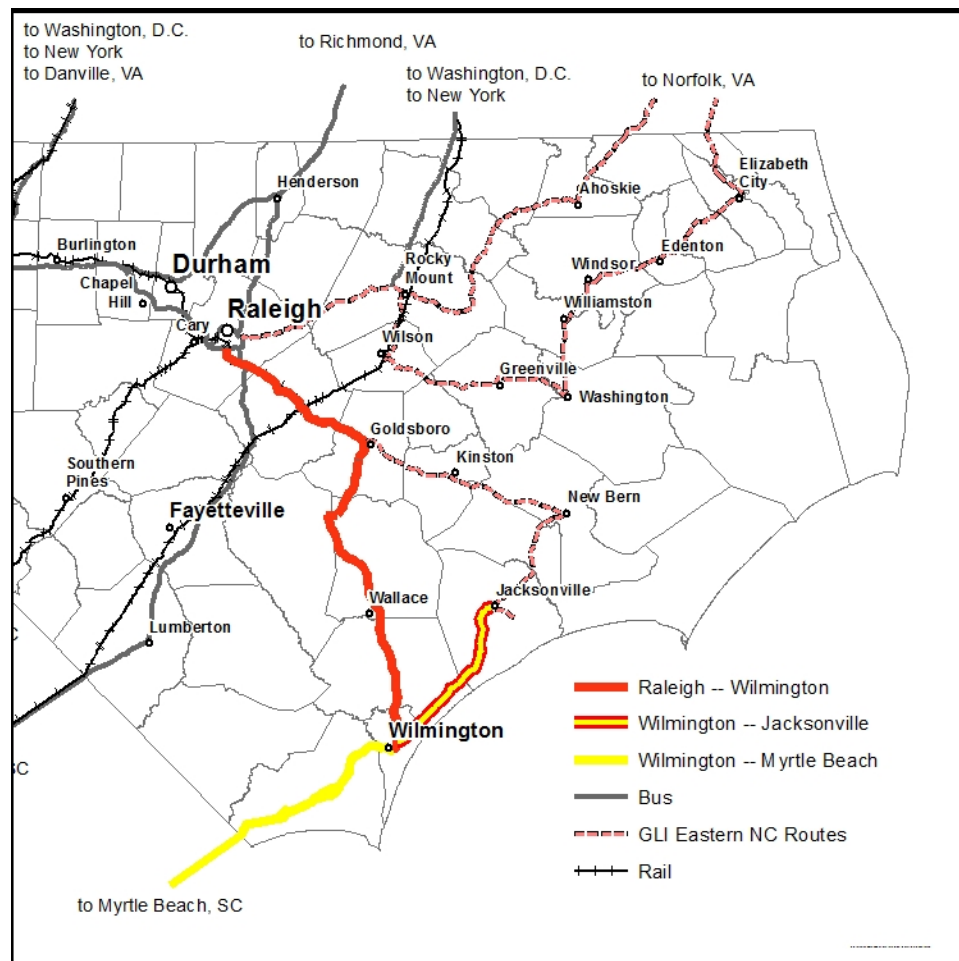
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Raleigh—Wilmington



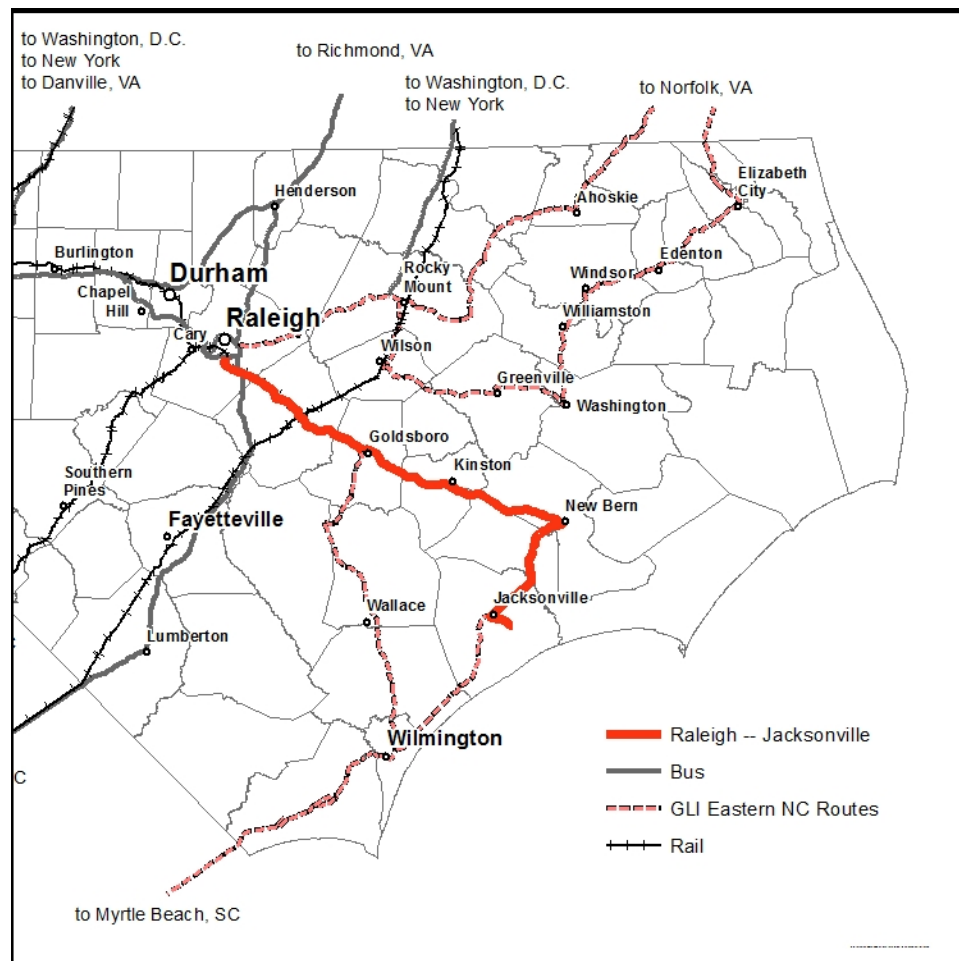
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Raleigh—Myrtle Beach, SC



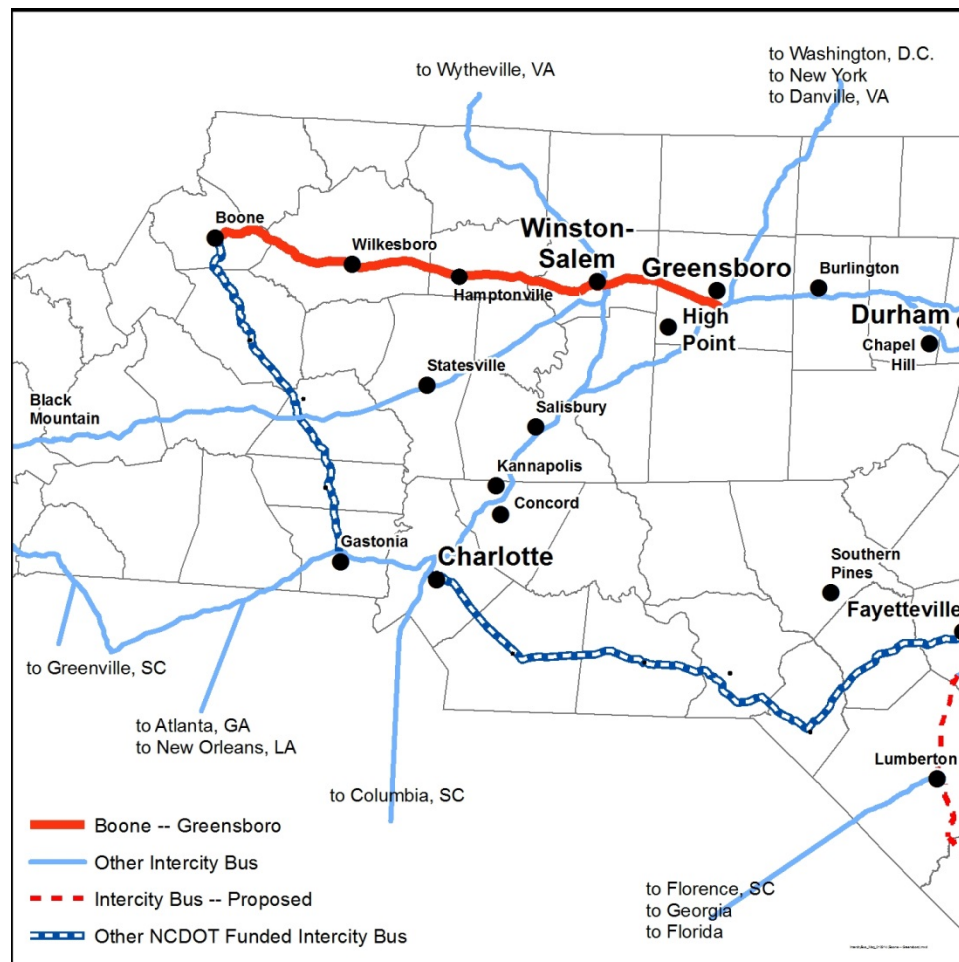
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Raleigh—Jacksonville



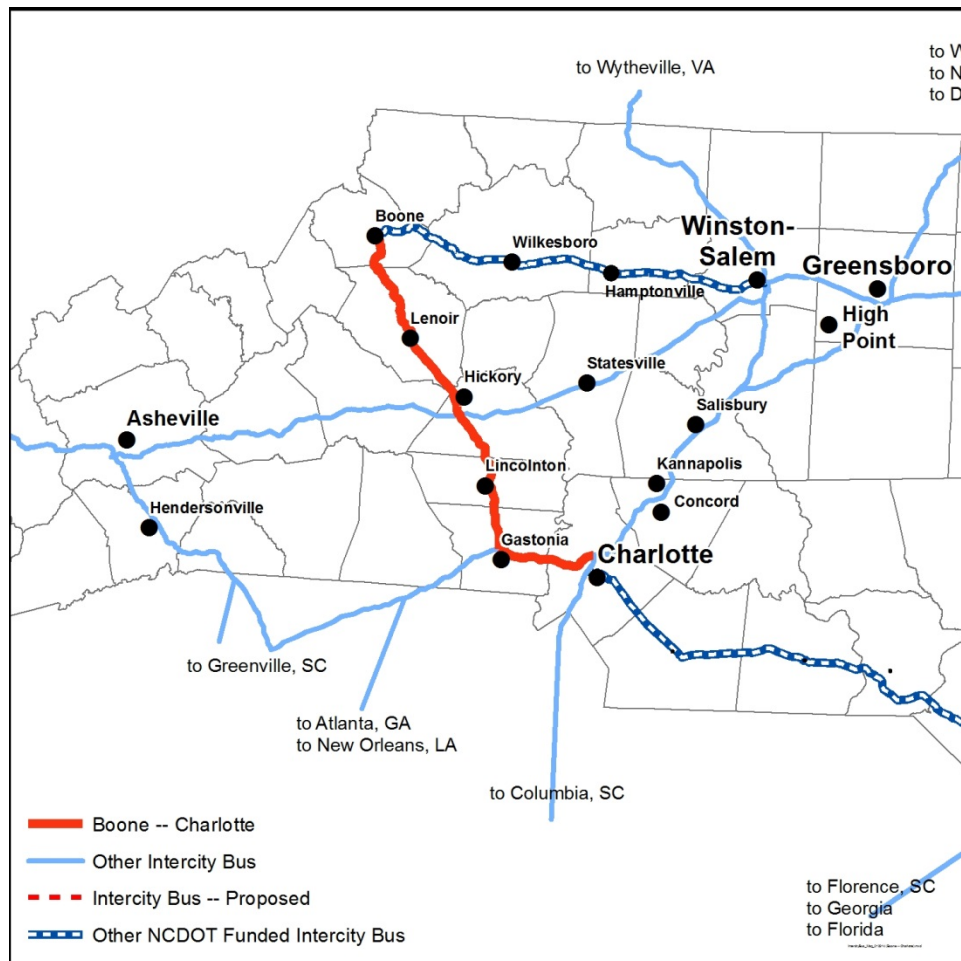
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Greensboro—Boone



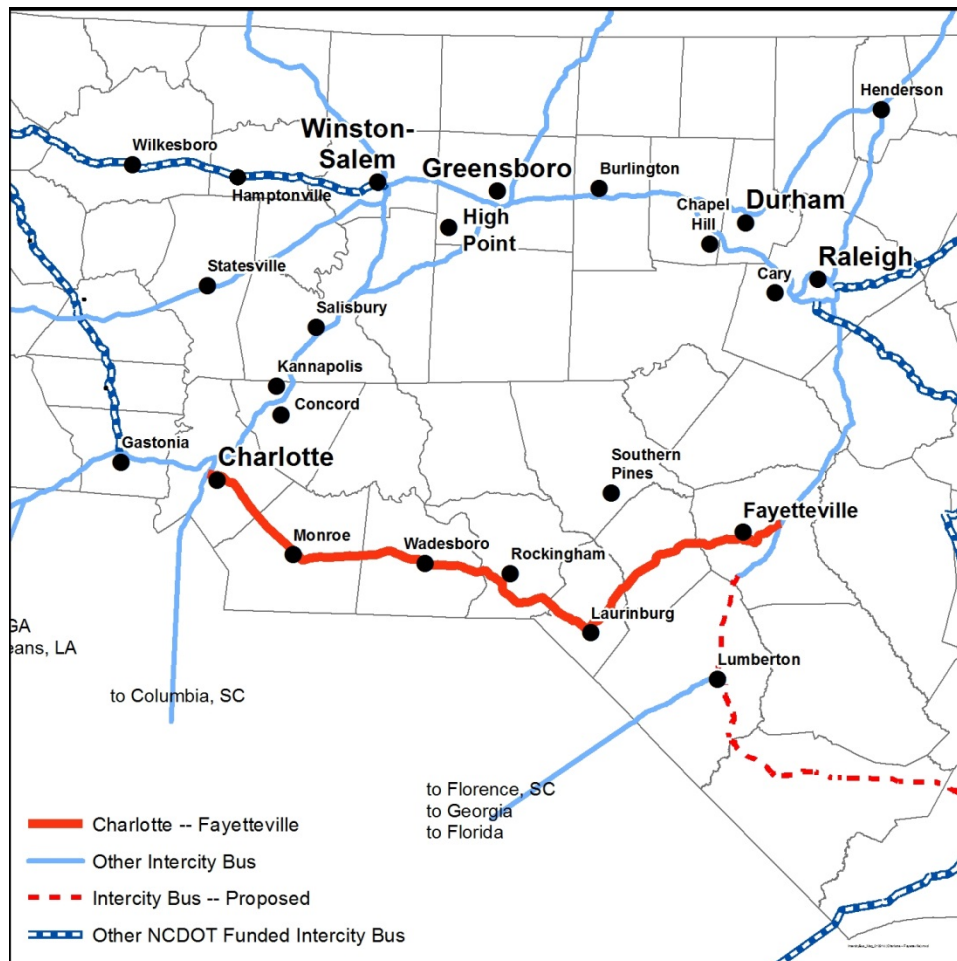
# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Boone—Charlotte



# Services Receiving Operating Assistance

## □ Charlotte—Fayetteville

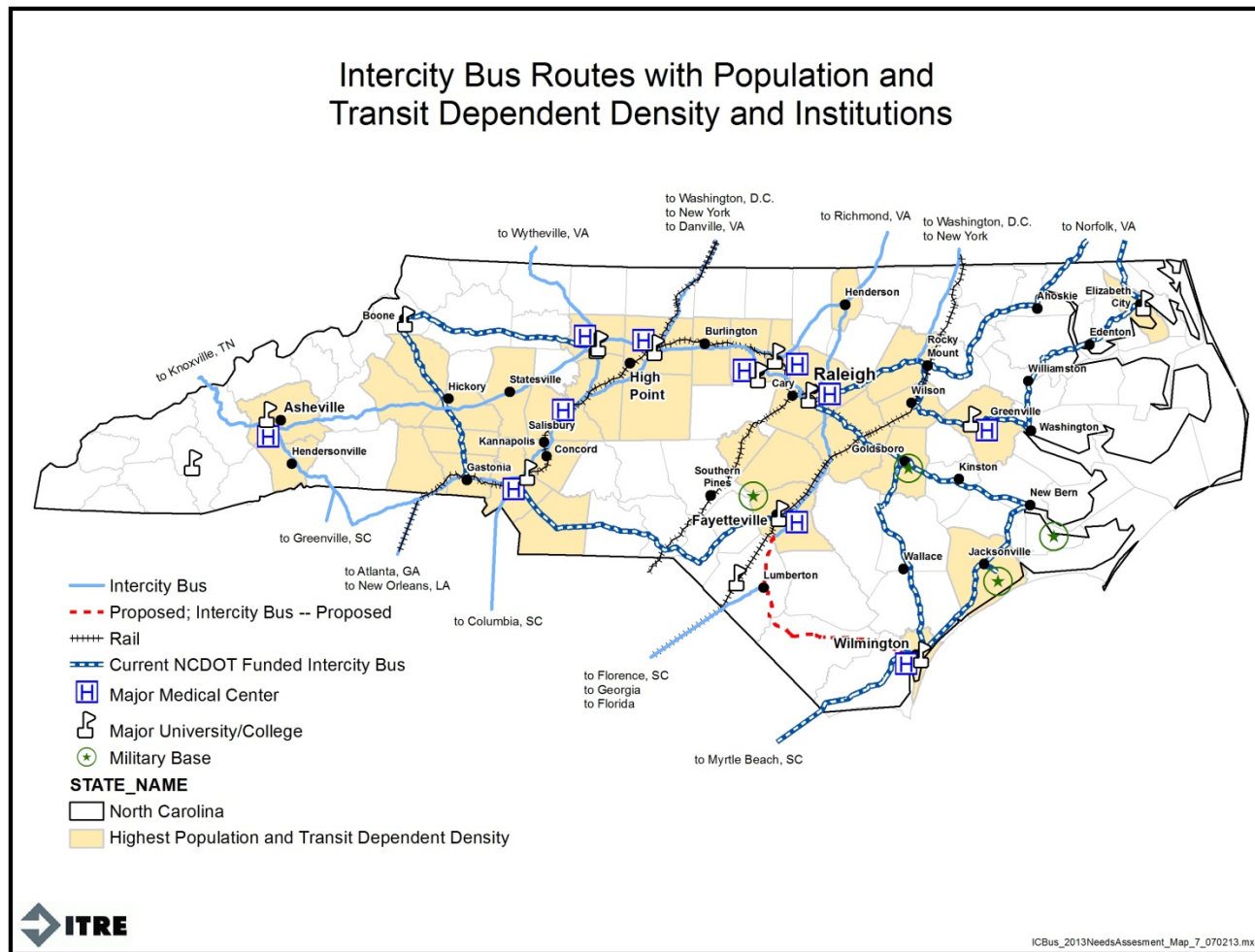


# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—Call for Applications

## □ *Call for Applications*—timeline:

Target Dates	Task/Event
January 3, 2014	Grant Application Instructions and Forms Distributed
January 22, 2014	Pre-application Conference (2-4 pm)
February 7, 2014	Applications Due
February 10-28, 2014	Application Review Process
March 1-14, 2014	Negotiate Final Service Details (as needed)
March 17-31, 2014	Grant Review/Approval by Board of Transportation
April 7, 2014	Grant Approval/Selected Applicant(s) Notified
July 1, 2014	Service Begins

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—Call for Applications



# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—CT System Opportunities

Eligible applicants:

- ❑ **Public, private non-profit**, and for-profit transportation providers
- ❑ Intercity bus providers
- ❑ **Local public bodies** (counties, municipalities, and regional or local planning organizations)
- ❑ Public or private non-profit organization can use a third-party for-profit operator

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—CT System Opportunities

## Future opportunities:

- **Feeder services** connecting to the statewide network:
  - To a stop within a CT System's service area (e.g., Boone, Greensboro, Elizabeth City, etc.)
  - Through 2 or more CT Systems' service areas to a stop (e.g., Murphy to Asheville, Sanford to Raleigh or Fayetteville, Manteo to Elizabeth City or Williamston, etc.)
- Comply with 5311(f) requirements—regular schedule, to intercity bus station/stop, interline, etc.

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—CT System Opportunities



## Other Opportunities:

- Provide ***input on unmet needs*** in response to *Needs Assessment* survey
- ***Stop at intercity bus stations / stops*** in your service area as part of your fixed-route, deviated fixed-route, and demand-response services

# NC DOT Intercity Bus Program—summary

- What it is / is not
- Key aspects of the 5311(f) program—objectives, requirements
- Key aspects of the NC DOT program—goals, *Statewide Network Plan*, process
- Funding
- Services receiving operating assistance
- *Call for Applications to Operate Services*—potential opportunities for CT systems

# North Carolina DOT Intercity Bus Program



- Questions?